

App. No. 09/993026
Amd. Dated July 6, 2004
Office Action Dated April 6, 2004

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. Claim 22 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-9, 11 and 16-21 are pending.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 1-9, 11 and 16-21.

Claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Depoix (EP 0 664 241 A1). This rejection is rendered moot, as claim 22 has been canceled. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested. Any questions or concerns regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, John J. Gresens, Reg. No. 33,112, at 612.371.5265.

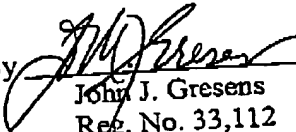
Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300



Dated: July 6, 2004

JJG:mmm

By 
John J. Gresens
Reg. No. 33,112